

In my role as Chairman of the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, I have been at the forefront of shaping our nation's transportation policy while ensuring that western and central Massachusetts receive its fair share of transportation dollars.

Here are some examples of my top transportation priorities:

Public Transportation - As fuel prices reach an all-time high, demand for public transportation is increasing as riders seek to lower their commuting costs. With this increased demand we must ensure that as many people as possible have access to dependable and affordable public transportation. That is why my Subcommittee has provided a record level of funding to expand public transit services.

Intermodal Transit Centers - Multi-modal transit centers serve as a centralized hub, linking different forms of transportation, such as rail, intercity buses, transit buses and taxicabs. Transit centers can also attract new businesses, create jobs and revitalize downtown centers. I have secured funding for six transit centers in the First Congressional district - Athol, Holyoke, Pittsfield, Fitchburg, Franklin County and Westfield.

Intra/Inter-City Rail - I am a strong advocate of passenger rail travel. Our population has reached record levels, and the challenges created by this growth - congested highways and airspace, increased travel delays, and environmental degradation - are clear. It should also be clear that we cannot build our way out of these mobility problems with new roads and airports alone. Rail must play an integral role in our nation's transportation policy. To this end, I have been a strong supporter of AMTRAK and local commuter rail lines.

- **AMTRAK** - I believe that we must continue to invest in our nation's inter-city rail system. Beyond giving travelers more options, AMTRAK keeps cars off already congested roads and provides an environmentally-friendly mode of transportation. In fact, on a passenger-miles basis, AMTRAK is 17 percent more energy-efficient than air travel and 21 percent more efficient than automobile travel in terms of reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Looking to the future, I believe we must move beyond simply keeping AMTRAK afloat and we should invest in modest capital improvements to implement higher speed rail within 100- to 500-mile corridors in this country. That would make train travel a more attractive option than driving or flying in many areas where it is currently not.

- **Commuter Rail & the Fitchburg Line** - Commuter rail access is a significant issue for many residents of the western and central Massachusetts. I am very pleased that over the years I have been able to secure millions of dollars to make rail travel a more practical and appealing option for many in my district. For example, the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line project will make significant infrastructure improvements that will reduce travel time from Fitchburg to Porter Square while making the trip more commuter-friendly.

Environmentally Sensitive Transportation Policies - I strongly support the "greening" of our public transportation system. Our nation's transportation policy must consider the affects our usage of transportation has on the environment. Between 1990 and 2006, emissions from the transportation sector increased by more than 25 percent. In fact, automobiles now account for 55 percent of total emissions in a typical two-car family and are the largest contributor of a household's carbon footprint. This is one reason why investing in public transit makes good sense. I will do my part to ensure that the well-being of our environment is always strongly considered when crafting our nation's transportation policies.